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SUBJECT Full Text

BILL MONROE: Our guests today on this one-hour edition of Meet the Press are key leaders of the opposition to the new strategic arms limitation treaty known as SALT II. Last week we heard Secretary of State Vance and Secretary of Defense Brown speak for the treaty.

SALT II was agreed on 10 days ago by the United States and the Soviet Union, but it will not take effect unless the U.S. Senate ratifies it by a two-thirds vote. Our guests today will be working to block Senate ratification of the treaty. They are Senator Jake Garn, Republican of Utah, Chairman of the Defense Task Force of the American Conservative Union; Paul Nitze, former Pentagon official, former SALT negotiator, now Chairman, Policy Studies, Committee on the Present Danger; and retired Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, former Chief of Naval Operations.

Gentlemen, the SALT II treaty negotiations have been going on through three American Administrations, countless meetings, something like seven years. Each side has finally agreed to put some limits on its weapons-building. If this treaty is approved, talks will begin toward a third treaty, and there are some hopes it will actually cut back nuclear weapons.

Senator Garn, if SALT II is rejected, won't that put us in a more dangerous arms race, one without any limits?

SENATOR JAKE GARN: Mr. Monroe, I think just the opposite would take place. I am very much in favor of an arms control treaty. I think both nations have far too many nuclear weapons. I think think it would be in the best interests of both countries to reduce those weapons. But this treaty is

being sold as an arms control treaty. Over and over again, I hear that term. I heard you just say that it would reduce weapons.

One of the major reasons that I am against it is because it is not arms control; it masquerades as such. But we are limiting launchers or vehicles. It's like telling that we can have five rifles at home, but you can have most of all the ammunition you want. And this really disturbs me because I would like to see true arms reduction.

Now, we're going to limit some 250 launchers, and the Soviets will be required to reduce by that number. But interestingly enough, under the terms of SALT II, without any cheating whatsoever or use of any of the loopholes, the Soviet Union would be able to increase by a minimum of 5000 warheads over the number that they currently have.

The treaty is inequitable. It allows the Soviet Union types and sizes of weapons that we simply are not allowed. And the heavy missile system, the so-called SS-18, it's a huge missile, which we allow them to have 308. We have zero. We allow them to have a Backfire bomber, but we cannot have a B-1 bomber unless it is included under the sublimit.

And I believe that we should not sign a treaty, even if it were a good treaty, if it was not verifiable. And I sincerely believe that we cannot verify this treaty.

So, for those reasons and the fact that the three of them put together, I sincerely believe, will give the Soviet Union absolute nuclear superiority by the mid-1980s, 1985, when the treaty ends, that this treaty should be rejected.

MONROE: Mr. Nitze, aren't there some limits on weapons-building that we would have under this treaty that would not be there if the treaty is rejected?

PAUL NITZE: Let me make a preliminary comment, and that is that our committee -- you referred to it as being devoted to blocking SALT. This is not true. What we want to assure is that the debate, when there is a debate before the Senate, is fair and all the facts are brought out and that the Senate really debates this.

Certainly, we are skeptical about it.

MONROE: You're not opposed to ratification of the treaty, Mr. Nitze?

NITZE: We would like to see -- I believe that after this debate the Senate will wish to have it clarified, modified,

amended. And it depends upon what the treaty really says and how it is dealt with in the Senate as to whether our group will finally come out for or against ratification.

MONROE: And the question is, as to the treaty, won't there be some limits on weapons-building in the treaty that would not be there without the treaty?

NITZE: That is quite right. But what Senator Garn said is totally correct. The treaty limits the wrong thing. The limits are vastly too high. They are uneven as between the Soviet Union and they favor the Soviet Union. Under these limits, living within those limits, the Soviet Union will, within the period of the treaty, attain, I think, dangerous superiority, nuclear superiority, over the United States. And it think that we should not permit. We have to do things about it.

Certainly, there are limits within the treaty that there wouldn't be otherwise. But the limits are too high, they limit the wrong things.

MONROE: Admiral Zumwalt, wouldn't rejection of the treaty jeopardize the whole difficult process, long-range process of arms negotiation?

ADMIRAL ELMO ZUMWALT: No. In my judgment, it would facilitate it. It would make it loud and clear to the Soviet Union that we expect arms control, rather than unilateral advantage, to be granted from these arrangements.

Let me, in extension of the points that Senator Garn and Secretary Nitze have made, just demonstrate what happened as the Administration talks about equal numbers of launchers. Let's examine just one category, that category of launchers out of which would be launched the kind of missiles that the Soviet Union will use for a first strike. That is, the intercontinental ballistic missiles carrying multiple warheads designed to hit individual targets.

The ceiling on that number is 820 launchers, under SALT II. Now, here is the only missile for that kind of launcher that the United States has, the Minuteman III. It contains three warheads. We're forced by the Soviets to limit it to three, even though it's been tested for seven. Even more significant, we can't fill the 820 holes that we're authorized to have. Mr. Carter has stopped the production line of these. So 550 is what we're going to have to live with, not the ceiling of 820.

Now, the Soviet Union will get to its ceiling of 820. This is the SS-19 Soviet missile. It has three times the payload of the Minuteman. They are authorized, on this and on a slightly

smaller version, the SS-17, to have six and four warheads respectively, as opposed to our three, and all larger. They will have, during the course of SALT I, 512 launchers filled with that kind of a missile.

But that's not all. Let's take a look at the Soviet SS-18 missile. That missile, a huge monster, carries 10 warheads, each of which are three times more destructive than the warheads of ours. The Soviet Union, as Mr. Nitze and Senator Garn have said, has been authorized to keep all 308 of these, rather than to reduce, as they were expected to do, rather than reduce, as Mr. Carter asked them to do in his comprehensive proposal of March 1977. We went back to them, our Administration, and said, "Would you believe 190?" And they said no. We said, "Would you accept 220?" And they said no. We said would you accept 250?" And they said no. And we finally permitted them to keep all 380 of these huge missiles.

MONROE: Thank you, gentlemen.

Our reporters on Meet the Press today are Ford Rowan of NBC News, Morton Kondracke of The New Republic, Robert Novak of the Chicago Sun-Times, and Robert Kaiser of The Washington Post.

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MONROE: We'll continue with questions for Senator Garn from Ford Rowan of NBC.

FORD ROWAN: Senator, I'd like to ask you about those very graphic demonstration of the size of missiles we just saw. Of course, it's unlikely that anyone that's hit by a nuclear weapon is going to ask, "How big was it?" But still, they are -- you do see the Soviets have larger, heavier weapons.

And the question comes up -- and we've asked the Administration this -- how do you account for the inequities that seem to appear? And their answer is that the SALT treaty will limit the number of warheads that the Soviets can put on those giant missiles. And without SALT, they might not be limited to 10 warheads or MIRVs or multiple weapons on top of each one of those missiles. And therefore we will be able to have a fixed limit, know what the Soviets can do, know what capabilities, and be able to make our own missiles more survivable, and thus have a more credible defense.

How do you answer that?

SENATOR GARN: First of all, you point out one of the very severe difficulties in inequities: that we allow them to have 308 of those with 10 warheads. You're correct. We are

allowed to have none of those and we are only allowed to have three warheads on each of our missiles. So a tremendous disparity.

And that SS-18 has more destructive power all by itself than all of our nuclear warheads put together from every source. So I can't conceive of why we allow them to have it.

President Carter, in March of 1977, told the Soviets, "You can have 150 of them." They insisted on 308. We compromised at 308. Over and over again in this treaty, we simply have allowed them to accept their numbers.

Now, in specific response to your question, this is not an arms control treaty. It's incredible to me that the Administration says this will place a limit. It does not. Again I repeat, it allows a 5000, minimum, increase in the number of warheads the Soviet Union has.

ROWAN: Senator, the total package -- not just the treaty, but the other accompanying documents -- will permit the United States, over time, to develop a new weapon that will have the 10 warheads, the MX, if the Administration and Congress decide to go along with that. Do you think that would make up for the inequities that you've demonstrated or talked about?

SENATOR GARN: Absolutely not. The MX is not a heavy missile, would not even be considered in that class. They would still have the tremendous heavy advantage.

MORTON KONDRACKE: Mr. Nitze, your opposition to SALT seems to be based on a nightmare scenario in which the Soviets could use their superiority in those missiles that we saw to launch a surprise first strike against our missiles and then demand that the United States surrender.

Do you think it's really credible that they would risk such an attack, or even threaten such an attack, in view of the uncertainties involved -- that is, whether all the missiles would get where they're supposed to go -- and our ability to retalitate, using submarine missiles and airplanes, against thousands of targets on their side? Is that kind of scenario credible?

NITZE: You've completely misstated my position. I've made it clear in everything that I've said that I do not think that the Russians want a nuclear war. There would be no other reason why they're spending so much on their civil defense program, and so forth and so on, unless they fully realized how destructive a nuclear war would be.

The point is that they do want, and very much want, nuclear superiority. They want to be much stronger in the

nuclear field than we. And they think that they can attain their objectives without war much better if they have nuclear superiority.

Now, it is really the political use that they will make of superiority which I think is the most likely threat. It is not that they will go to war, but that they will be in a better position to cover, to put an umbrella upon any escalation by us if they have clear-cut nuclear superiority.

KONDRACKE: But is there a politically exploitable nuclear superiority if the military use of the superiority is not credible? How do you translate into political terms if you admit that they can't use the weapons militarily?

NITZE: I didn't say that. I said that they would not wish to. Similarly, back when we had nuclear superiority, at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, we did not want to use that nuclear superiority. We knew, however, that the Russians were much more inhibited than we, because we were much stronger than they. Therefore, it was possible for us, with full confidence, to go forward with the quarantine of Cuba and win that political confrontation.

Now, if the circumstances had been reversed, I doubt very much whether we would have done, or they would have done what they did during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

KONDRACKE: But at the end of World War II, when we had absolute superiority, we had nuclear weapons and they had none, we were not able to prevent them from moving into Eastern Europe and taking over Eastern Europe as satellites. I don't understand how this arguable superiority of theirs is translatable in this kind of a day and age to any kind of political advantage.

NITZE: Nuclear superiority isn't the only factor that counts. But when one looks at the conventional military balance, that also favors the Soviet Union, and did favor the Soviet Union in Europe at the time you're talking of. And when one has a combination of conventional super -- military superiority and nuclear superiority, then the other side really has to worry.

ROBERT NOVAK: Admiral Zumwalt, on this program a week ago the Secretary of Defense, Harold Brown, said that the many retired general officers who are opposing this treaty, quote, tend to exaggerate the forces on the other side, unquote -- that is, the Soviet forces -- and that the present serving officers on the Joint Chiefs of Staff better appreciate the limits placed on the Soviet Union by the treaty.

Isn't it a little difficult for the American public to believe that the present members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff don't have a better appreciation of the danger than retired officers, such as yourself?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: Well, I think that my friend Harold Brown missed a good chance to maintain his accurate reputation in that answer.

I would say that an equally cutting but more accurate statement would be that military officers have more difficulty than Cabinet members in departing from reality when Presidents have made decisions, such as the decisions in SALT II; and that the difference between retired and active is that the retired are able to speak up fully in public, whereas the active military are muzzled. They must answer only to congressional committees and only if they are in charge of their services.

Now, I have been kept very fully informed of the positions that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have submitted to the Secretary of Defense and the President throughout the process of SALT II, and I can tell you that if that series of written recommendations is submitted to the Congress during this ratification process, that the Senate will have great difficulty in believing that the Joint Chiefs of Staff...

MONROE: Senator Garn, you want to add a brief comment?

SENATOR GARN: Yes, very brief.

It's interesting that over the last 10 to 12 years, when the Joint Chiefs of Staff have come up with their estimates of Soviet strength and the gap between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, they have been criticized as overestimating. If you review those statements, you will find out that the military leaders through those years have significantly, year after year, underestimated the Soviet strength.

NOVAK: I just want to pursue what the Admiral said. It is my understanding, told by officials in the Administration, that the Joint Chiefs of Staff and its individual members will support this treaty.

Are you telling us, sir, that this support will be in contradiction to their private and secret estimates submitted to the President?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: I'm telling you that if the Secretary of Defense submits to the Senate the list of position papers that the Joint Chiefs of Staff has submitted over the months, that the senators will be shocked at how far their views have been watered down.

For example, they have always insisted that the Backfire bomber should be counted as strategic, and the President has decided not to do so.

NOVAK: Let's see if I can pin this down. Are you saying that if an officer, a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff today would endorse this treaty, considering the past background reports he has made, he would be intellectually dishonest?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: No. The members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have to decide whether or not a decision made by a President who tells them that there are political factors beyond their purview that must be considered should be supported or whether they should leave office. I gather that these members believe that they should support, despite their deep reservations, SALT II.

ROBERT KAISER: Senator Garn, the Carter Administration sees you as an extremist critic of SALT. You obviously hold strong views about the Carter Administration. You said recently that the President had failed to understand the nature of world politicsl. Just now you said the President has approved a SALT treaty that will give the Soviets absolute nuclear superiority by 1985.

Does that mean that you would feel safer and more secure if the United States now traded strategic arsenals with the Soviet Union? Would you like to have their forces better than ours? Would you like to have their bombers or their submarines or their anti-submarine warfare capacity, or even their ICBMs, in preference to our own?

SENATOR GARN: Absolutely not at this point. I think what is described as rough equivalence or parity does exist between the two countries. My concern is signing the SALT II treaty that will change that balance.

We signed SALT I with great hope and were told that it would cut the nuclear arms race. But what has happened? We have gone from a position of absolute nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union, under an arms control treaty, to where they now have parity or rough equivalence.

I believe that SALT II will give them superiority. And that is dangerous to the peace and security of this country.

KAISER: If SALT II is ratified and things go on as they now look, would you be prepared to advocate swapping forces in 1985?

SENATOR GARN: By 1985, if they continue their massive

buildup, yes, I would.

ROWAN: Mr. Nitze, I'd like to follow up on something you said earlier. You suggested that there were amendments to this agreement that would enable you to support it.

NITZE: I didn't say that.

ROWAN: Well, I gathered from it that if amendments -- well, let me ask you, then. Are there any amendments that could be made to this treaty that would make you support it?

NITZE: I think there are, but I didn't say that earlier. I said I hope that the Senate, after a debate, would see whether or not they wish to propose clarifications and amendments to the treaty.

ROWAN: Well, with that view in mind, are there any amendments that you think would make this treaty acceptable to you?

NITZE: Well, I think there are some that appear to me to be wholly desirable. The first that appears to me to be wholly desirable is to have it clarified that we can do what is necessary in order to make our ICBMs more survivable. I believe the wording of the treaty now will make that either impossible or much more expensive.

Secondly, I think it would be desirable for the Senate to consider an amendment which would give the United States the same right to modern large ballistic missiles, the missiles that Senator Garn was talking to -- talking about, that they have. Not that we want to build such a missile during this period or that we can, but I believe it important to establish the principle of equity, of equivalence, of equality now, because people are talking about SALT III. And if you're going to negotiate SALT III, it is absolutely essential that we now take steps to establish the principle of equality.

ROWAN: Okay, if I could follow up on that. On that first point, it is possible that amendments could be reached that the White House and perhaps the Soviets could accept. But on the second point, the equivalence, it's hard to believe that -- you're asking them, in effect, to renegotiate the whole treaty. It's hard to believe that...

NITZE: Why shouldn't -- why shouldn't the Soviet Union agree to an amendment which would give us the same right that they've insisted on, particularly if we make it clear we want that right to be as close to zero as they will accept? If we could get that in, I see no reason why they shouldn't accept this. I would be wholly equitable. It would not cost them

anything. All it would do is to establish the principle of equality. And I don't see why there shouldn't be that principle.

MONROE: Admiral Zumwalt, you want to add a word?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: Yes. The failure of the Soviets to accept that proposal would emphasize before the world their insistence on having a first strike capability. That's the only virtue of those huge beasts that they're insisting on keeping.

KONDRACKE: Admiral Zumwalt, how important in your opposition to SALT is the alleged inability of the United States to verify the agreement?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: I fully agree that this treaty is unverifiable. My own view is that the treaty is so bad that verifiability becomes a secondary issue.

KONDRACKE: Why do you say the treaty is unverifiable?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: In the first place, the loss of the stations in Iran will not recovered from for a long period of time. My former associates tell me that Secretary Brown's forecast in that regard was grossly optimistic.

KONDRACKE: But if the treaty is rejected, how will the United States be able to tell what the Soviet Union is doing in nuclear missiery. They will be able to encode their telemetry. They will be able to hide their missiles. They won't be sharing with us anymore the data base on which the figuring is done. And they can build as many warheads into their heavy missiles as they want to.

I mean how are we going to tell, in the absence of an agreement, what they're doing?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: Well, let me make the point, in the first place, that the Soviet Union, under the treaty, can build as many missiles and as many warheads as they want. The only thing that is limited are the launchers from which those missiles will be fired. The Soviet Union has already built over 1000 additional intercontinental ballistic missiles and hidden them around the United -- the Soviet Union. The United States, of course, has not done this.

KONDRACKE: But our -- but our satallites and other means enable us to know, roughly speaking, how many they have of -- well, more than roughly speaking, how many they have. But they can hide them even better, can't they,...

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: You see, what Mr. Carter is saying is that we can verify this treaty because we can count the launchers. We can't count the missiles. He doesn't pretend that we can. And the missiles are not limited by this treaty. They Soviets can have any number, and will have, under this treaty.

NOVAK: Senator Garn, as a member of the Senate and as a very successful practicing politician, do you really believe that one-third-plus-one members of the Senate will vote to reject a treaty when the President of the United States says that this country will be stamped in the world as warmongers if the treaty is rejected?

SENATOR GARN: First of all, I feel very strongly that the Administration does this country a great disservice when they talk about warmongers, when they use the Soviet line to criticize those of us who are against, or to say that we're extremists.

I repeat, I'm very much in favor of an arms limitation agreement. I would like to see ICBMs totally eliminated from both sides, intercontinental ballistic missiles. Obviously, that's the other extreme and is not possible to obtain.

But I really resent those kinds of charges. And I also resent the fact that we are being told, as a Senate, to accept whatever the President sends us. That is the same line that we received on the Panama Canal treaty. And the Constitution says that the Senate of the United States will advise and consent, a coequal body on treaties, and that we'll take a look. Otherwise, there's no point in a Senate. Why not just have this President or any other negotiate any treaty he wants and say, "I have decided this is good," with no debate? We have a right to advise and consent.

NOVAK: I understand your resentment, sir, but that wasn't what I asked you. I asked you if you thought that the one-third-plus-one members of the Senate would really buck the President of the United States on an issue where the polls indicate that the people do want some kind of an agreement with the Soviet Union?

SENATOR GARN: Well, I thought I answered your question, maybe not directly. But, yes, I think they will and I think they should.

And as a matter of the polls, most of the American people, more than 70 percent, are just like I am. They are in favor of arms reduction. But when you go into more depth in those polls, you find out that they're not sure whether the agreement is between the United States and the Soviet Union or

part of the United Nations. And so we're not dealing with the fact that they are in favor of this particular treaty. They are in favor of the concept of arms control, as I am.

NOVAK: Well, again, on the practical business of how the Senate votes, do you think the Senate would reject the treaty if it is supported by such members of your party as Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford, either of them?

SENATOR GARN: Well, I certainly hope that they will not support or oppose the treaty on a partisan basis, that they will look at the terms of the treaty and they'll find out that this treaty is severely flawed.

MONROE: We will pause here briefly in this special one-hour edition of Meet the Press with SALT II opponents.

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MONROE: Let me ask you gentlemen this, starting with Admiral Zumwalt. Getting back to those heavy missiles, which you have emphasized, Admiral, as I understand it, the Soviet Union has heavy missiles that we don't have because our military decided some years ago that we had such accuracy that we did not need missiles of that size. Now, under the SALT II treaty, they can keep those 308 missiles in place, but they cannot add new heavy missiles and they are forced to hold the warheads on those missiles down to 10. Without SALT II, as I understand it, they could go, perhaps, to 40 warheads on each missile, which makes a difference of 9000 warheads. Without SALT II, they could have 9000 additional warheads aimed at the United States.

Now, doesn't that improve U.S. security?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: First, the U.S. decision to stick to the smaller missiles was based on large part on the theory that we were trying to get the Russians to agree to, that each should forego a first strike capability, and so we kept ours with a combination of size and accuracy that has made it impossible for us to destroy Soviet missiles entirely in a first strike. All of our missiles fired in a first strike would get only 65 percent of the Soviet missiles.

The Soviets, on the other hand, have deliberately schemed to have a first strike capability. And with the number of warheads that they have deployed on the SS-18, 10, they have that capability as they get them all deployed with their new accuracy.

If I were a member of the Soviet JCS, I would be advising the Minister of Defense not to put more warheads on those SS-18s, because I would say to him, "I can now, in a first strike,

destroy almost all of the United States Minutemen, almost all of the United States bombers, and all of the submarines in port with only half of the SS-18s being fired. And we can save the rest for big blockbuster attacks on cities. We don't need any more warheads," I would say to him.

MONROE: So you're saying that the addition of 9000 warheads, which SALT II would prevent, is not a threat to us. That SALT II give us more security by preventing the addition of 9000 warheads.

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: I'm saying that SALT II permits the Soviets to gain a 5000-warhead advantage over us, with regard to multiple-warheaded ICBMs; and that that is all they need in order to be able to destroy all of our systems in a first strike, or nearly all.

MONROE: Mr. Nitze, if those heavy missiles are such a threat to us, why doesn't the SALT II treaty enhance our security by preventing them from adding any new heavy missiles and preventing them from going beyond 10 warheads per missile?

NITZE: In the first place, it doesn't prevent them from developing new versions of modern heavy ballistic missiles. In fact, I think they have a follow-on modern heavy ballistic missile in the works right now.

Secondly...

MONROE: Prevents them from deploying?

NITZE: During the period of the treaty. But the second point is that the treaty expires, by its terms, in 1985. Thereafter, they're free from this 10 level unless we negotiate a SALT III which contains a similar limitation.

There are things that are in the current agreements which we would like to have not survive. It's going to be very difficult for us to be sure that we can get into a follow-on agreement the things that we want and not give some of the things that they want. So that it's very uncertain as to what's going to happen after 1985.

The fundamental balance between the Soviet Union and ourselves in the nuclear field will be much more adverse in '82, '83, '84, when the next SALT agreement is up for negotiation, than it is today. I can see no possibility that the SALT III treaty will be as favorable as SALT II, and SALT II is wholly unfavorable and uneven as between the Soviet Union and ourselves.

MONROE: Senator Garn, would you comment on the fact

that the SALT II treaty holds the Soviet heavy missiles to this number of 308, they cannot go beyond that, and they cannot add more than 10 -- add more warheads beyond the 10 already on each missile?

SENATOR GARN: Well, first of all, I want to repeat again that this treaty does not limit the number of warheads; it limits launchers. It does not limit the number of SS-18s that can be built; it limits to 308 of holes in the ground they can launch it from. So they can build excess SS-18s, they can have a first strike, they can reload them in what's called cold-launch techniques.

MONROE: Well, doesn't the treaty prevent them from putting new missiles right by the launchers so that they can reload quickly, and doesn't it prevent them from testing the reloading process?

SENATOR GARN: Well, it's extremely naive if we think we have the capability to know where these thousand additional missiles are that we know they have. We don't know where they are. We don't have the kind of capability from satellites and electronic means to count all of those. It simply is not possible to do so.

They have already tested in a simulated mode 14 warheads inside the SS-18 nose cone. Now, you can look at that nose cone from satellite photography. You can't tell how many are inside.

I think the opportunity to cheat is much greater with SALT. And again I repeat, they can increase, under the terms of SALT, legally from a minimum of 5000 additional warheads over what they have now to as many as 15,000. The danger of nuclear war is increased by signing a treaty that not only does not freeze levels, let alone the impression we're constantly given that it's going to reduce; it increases the number of warheads on both sides. That is not a SALT treaty the American people should support.

MONROE: Thank you.

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MONROE: We'll continue the questions with Robert Kaiser.

KAISER: Mr. Nitze, your group, the Committee on the Present Danger, has published an eight-point program for enhancing the national security, all of which is permitted under the terms of SALT II. I wonder if you could give us, with some specificity, what more it is that you want. What specific steps

should the United States be taking that are not -- that would be precluded by SALT II? And how can we get more security for this country unilaterally than we can get under a negotiated agreement with the Russians?

NITZE: I believe one of the most important of the eight things that we think need to be done cannot be done, or is made much more expensive and difficult by SALT II, and that is the protection of the survivability and endurance of our Minutemen missiles; in fact, of our ICBMs as a whole.

I believe that in order to get -- make them survivable we have to carry out what is called the shell game of deployment, which involves a large number of additional silos. And we would have more silos than we do have missiles and cannisters for those missiles.

Now, that, I believe, is prohibited by the terms of the treaty, which say that neither side shall have additional fixed ICBM launchers. The Russians, I know, believe that that is the correct interpretation of the treaty, and have told us in no uncertain terms that they would consider any deployment of this type to be contrary to both the language and the spirit of the agreement.

KAISER: But Secretary Brown here said last week it's absolutely permitted.

NITZE: No, I don't believe he quite said that. He said that a mobile system would be permitted after the expiration of the protocol. This, I believe, is not a mobile system, and the Soviet Union does not look upon it as being a mobile system.

Now, perhaps this could be clarified. The Executive Branch does suggest that it's permitted. I would think that it would be -- if I were a senator, I would say, "Well, if you say that, let's be sure that we get the Russians to agree that that's what they think the language of this treaty means." I'm sure they don't today believe that that's what the treaty says.

Now, this, I think, is <u>the</u> most important thing we can do in order to preserve the survivability of our Minutemen silos.

MONROE: We have a senator present and he wants to say something about that.

SENATOR GARN: Well, I think what has been said here is absolutely true as far as understandings outside the treaty. We simply have to nail those down, because in SALT I we did not. And most of the violations of SALT I, which were massive in some cases, have been explained away as, "Well, they were the Soviets'

interpretation. We had unilateral interpretations. Therefore we can't hold them to it."

So, what Mr. Nitze says is absolutely true. We must tie down, so that there is no doubt of whether that is allowed or is not. And the treaty does not clarify it, and the Soviets do have a different interpretation than we.

KAISER: I'd like to get back to the basic question, though, Mr. Nitze. You're suggesting thousands -- 4000 is one version -- holes, 200 missiles could be bumped around secretly from one to another. This suggests to me the possibility of a whole new arms race in holes. The implication of much of what you said is that we really can't have this SALT treaty because it's too dangerous. The implication of that to me is we have to live in a world without SALT, with no provisions for data base exchange, no provisions outlawing concealment on both sides. We're entering into a whole new arms race.

How are we going to be more secure that way? How is the United States going to end up feeling safer than you obviously feel today?

NITZE: As one looks back at the entire history of U.S.-USSR relations from World War II to the present day, the times when we've felt most secure, and were most secure, [were] when our military power was adequate to the foreign policies we were conducting, when we were not in an inferior military position vis-a-vis Soviet Union.

What we're heading into now is a position where the Soviet Union will not only be stronger in conventional arms on the periphery of the Soviet Union and their satellites, but will also have tactical nuclear superiority in Europe, but, further than that, will have strategic nuclear superiority.

I think it's impossible to argue with a straight face that these -- the Soviet Union, with these great big missiles, which have, alone, more power than all of ours, that they will not then have strategic nuclear superiority.

KAISER: So we do need an arms race is what you're saying.

NITZE: What I'm saying is we've got to get at it in order to restore an adequate deterrent and an adequate military position for ourselves. And I would call it not an arms race, because we had been cutting back for the last 10 or 15 years in the size of our program. I would say we've got to catch up, we've got to play catch-up. And I see nothing wrong with playing catch-up.

ROWAN: Admiral Zumwalt, I'd like to ask you about the question, can the Russians cheat on this treaty, and can we find out if they do?

When the debate first started on SALT earlier this year, the opponents hammered on this issue that the SALT treaty could not be verifiable. Earlier today, you mentioned that you're more interested in the terms of the treaty itself than the question of verifiability. I think I'm accurately reflecting Mr. Nitze's views. He said the same thing, that the treaty's so bad, they wouldn't have to cheat.

But I want to ask you, because a lot of senators are worried about whether it can be verified, a lot of votes might hinge on that. And when you bring it up now with people in the Administration, like the Secretary of Defense, they're very glad to debate that issue because they think they can win on it.

Will you concede that major cheating could be spotted by the United States intelligence apparatus?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: Of course, some kind of cheating can be picked up. Other kinds of cheating cannot. For example, we have naively agreed that although the Soviets have said they will not encode, not put into code the radio signals that we need, we're letting them determine what it is that we need. They can code certain things and not encode others, under the agreement as it is proposed. This means that the Soviets can transmit information which they would like us to have that misleads us, while encoding information that we ought to have. It's almost a guaranteed system for permitting the Soviets to cheat in that regard.

ROWAN: Well, Admiral, as you know, as a consumer at one time of information provided by the intelligence community, you know when you're not getting something. And I'd like to go back to another thing be -- and let you answer on that, but let me also...

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: The answer to that is I didn't know what I wasn't getting, and I was frequently surprised to discover, far too late, that there was essential information that I did not get.

ROWAN: One of the things that was brought up earlier was the question of the importance of the loss of the Iranian bases. Well, there was a December 26th test by the Russians of their multiple warheads, the MIRVs. We obtained data on that from sources other than the Iranian bases. And the April 19th test, after we lost -- it was a test of the SS-18 -- after we'd lost Iran, the flight was tracked completely, without the bases in Iran.

Are you backing off from the feeling that that was such a large loss that SALT could not be verified?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: No. I believe that there are certain things that can be garnered without those Iranian facilities and there are certain things that cannot.

I hope that the Senate, during its hearings, will send for the people who actually have the responsibility of reporting this full data. They will find that they have a much different view than Harold Brown does, and believe that it's going to be very difficult for us.

MONROE: Senator Garn, briefly?

SENATOR GARN: I must comment on verification. I've been a member of the Arms Control Subcommittee and I'm a charter member of the Intelligence Committee, and I can't disclose what I know, for obvious reasons. I would be accused of being a leaker by the Administration, once again.

But from the briefings that I have had from Administration people in top secret meetings, this treaty is not verifiable by national technical means -- that's satellites or photography -- before 1984 or 1985. We'll pick up gradually in that capability. It's not an either-or. But before we pick up those Iranian sites it'll be 1984 or '85, the capability of those sites.

MONROE: Admiral?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: I'd like to remind you again, however, that the Soviet Union can do so many things without cheating to change still further to their advantage their superiority -- by, for example, deploying thousands of additional missiles -- that they ought to do the things that they can do.

KONDRACKE: Senator Garn, you've criticized this treaty as not really being arms control. But I'd like to know from you, if the treaty is defeated, what -- will we have better arms control?

SENATOR GARN: Well, I'm glad you asked that question, because I wanted to respond back to Mr. Kaiser.

We are being told by the Soviet Union and by our own Administration that this is the end of the world; that if we defeat it, we go back to some horrible conditions of the 1950s' Cold War. Brezhnev told me that personally, along with other senators, in the Kremlin in January.

I don't accept that. If the Soviet Union really sincerely wants to cut down the nuclear arms race, they will be

willing to accept the fact that the Senate of the United States is a separate coequal body in government and that we do have the right to change it or to defeat it, and they would be willing to return to the bargaining table to work on a treaty that was true arms control, that was equitable, and that was verifiable.

Now, I don't accept this end of the world. I went to Geneva in April a year ago. We were told it would be signed by June. Then it was October. Then it was December. We have not fallen off the edge of the world. And there's a lack of sincerity on both sides if we defeat it and don't go back to the bargaining table.

I want a SALT agreement, but not this one.

KONDRACKE: Well, suppose the Administration is right and that the Soviets do not want to renegotiate the treaty. Then wouldn't you be in favor of doing things like building the MX missile and whatever other things it takes in order to undo the Soviet advantage? And wouldn't that be the end of arms control?

SENATOR GARN: I would be in favor of doing those things. But I believe that it will require a greater arms buildup, under the terms of SALT II, to make up for the deficiencies.

KONDRACKE: Now, wait. But they will not stop doing what they're doing. As a matter of fact, they would stop at 802 land-based ICBMs; they would continue, probably, to 1000. We would have to build more weapons in order to catch up with them. And that would not be arms control.

Furthermore...

SENATOR GARN: SALT I -- SALT I allowed them to catch up. SALT II will allow them to build as rapidly as their economy will be able to take it. I see no difference whatsoever.

KONDRACKE: But why should they stop...

SENATOR GARN: We cannot sign a bad treaty just to have a treaty and the fear tactics that this Administration is using.

KONDRACKE: But isn't it a fact that if we build the MX missile with 10 warheads each -- and we're now supposed to have 200 of them. But if we build 300 of them -- that we'll have a first strike capability against their land-based missiles? And isn't that what the opponents of SALT are really after?

SENATOR GARN: If we don't build MX, the threat to this country, with or without SALT, is so tremendous that I fear for the survival of our country.

NOVAK: Mr. Nitze, I'd like to explore a couple of possibilities under which you would or would not support this treaty. Dr. Kissinger has made the point that if the Administration shows a greater awareness of the Soviet threat in geopolitical terms -- for example, its support of the North Yemen regime against the Marxists' threats -- that he would be more inclined to support the treaty.

Do you feel that that should be a factor in the discussion of this treaty?

NITZE: I would think that the short-term actions of the Soviet Union -- or, in fact, of both sides -- are not pertinent to a treaty of this fundamental importance and duration. After all, here we're talking about a treaty which will last till 1985 and, presumptively, will be the forerunner of follow-on agreements. That's the whole theory of it. After all, the ABM treaty goes on indefinitely. That's the kind of a treaty that we thought we were going to negotiate in SALT II. We haven't succeeded, but that's the idea.

Now, to judge that kind of a treaty just on short-term things seems to me to be wrong. I think one ought to look back at what has been the -- what has been the purpose, what has been the persistent theme of the Soviet Union during the entire period from World War II. What have they been trying to do? We know an awful lot about what they've been trying to do. They haven't changed that much. They've been following a persistent line.

That's the thing to look at. It isn't just the short-term things that worry one.

NOVAK: Now, the other hypothetical I'd like to put to you is, if the Administration can convince you that, through a mobile missile system, perhaps this trench system, where you shift the ICBM on a railroad track through a long trench which is open for inspection, that our land-based deterrent, the ICBM, is protected, if you were convinced of that, would you support the treaty even though it isn't exactly to your liking?

NITZE: You're suggesting a hypothetical situation. First of all, I do not believe that the shell game system, which is the only system which I believe -- certainly, for a long time it was the only one that the Air Force thought would work...

NOVAK: I was talking about the trench system.

NITZE: I think the trench system will be much more expensive and, I believe, less effective. I'm not sure of that, but I believe that to be the case. I'm sure it'll be more expensive, and it will be more expensive -- and we'll go for it only because it is the only way in which you can try to improve the

survivability of our Minuteman and still stay within the terms of the treaty.

NOVAK: And is this mobile missile, as one of the...

NITZE: Well, it isn't -- the trench system would be a mobile missile, yes.

NOVAK: Now, is this -- is the whole MX an effort to get a first strike capability, as Mr. Kondracke suggested in his question?

NITZE: I think that the priority -- we should put the priority on the survivability of our ICBMs first. That's the most important thing.

Secondly, we ought to put second priority, only, on increasing the power of our ICBMs. It is important that we be equal or roughly equal, that we haver rough equivalence with the Soviet Union. But it's much more important, in my mind, that the relationship between us be a stable one, where there isn't a temptation for either side to hit first.

KAISER: Admiral Zumwalt, when you gave us your little show and tell here with the rockets, I wonder if it would have been relevant for you to mention that the Soviet Union keeps nearly three-quarters of its strategic forces in those rockets, and we, by our own choice, keep only one quarter, or so, of our strategic forces in those rockets. And would it also be relevant to mention that in submarines and in bombers and in cruise missiles, we retain significant leads over the Soviet Union?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: The first part of what you said is misleading. I think the reason that the Soviet Union is able to have a larger number of missiles than we have is because they have been permitted to have their strategic Backfire bomber force not count as strategic bombers, even though the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Central Intelligence Agency have called it strategic. Mr. Carter has with the wave of his hand said it's not. So that they are permitted to have part of their total power not count.

KAISER: I was referring only to the rockets, where they've chosen to put 70 percent of their strength into ICBMs.

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: The Soviet Union has been permitted to gain that advantage by having the huge missiles that I showed. And this huge advantage is what has made it possible for them to have a first strike capability.

In its simplest terms, what SALT II does is to protect and underpin the Soviets' first strike capability and to make it

very difficult for the United States to work around that first...

KAISER: How can you talk about a first strike when we retain so many forces in submarines safe and invulnerable at sea? How can they have a first strike against us?

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: Because the Soviet Union, in its first strike, using about one-half of those huge missiles, will destroy in excess of 90 percent of our intercontinental ballistic missiles,...

KAISER: Twenty percent of our force.

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT: ...in excess of 90 percent of our bomber force, and will destroy all the submarines in port. They will have evacuated their cities. And we will then have a President facing the alternative of surrender or of destroying empty cities and inviting retaliation that would kill well over half of Americans.

That is the picture that makes the United States need to back down in a confrontation under SALT II.

MONROE: Thank you, Admiral Zumwalt, Mr. Nitze, and Senator Garn, for being with us today on Meet the Press.